

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. Since the SED Politburo has had no regular meetings since the beginning of the World Youth Festival, and the SED Central Committee has not met since the first of August 1951, there is at present a noticeable uncertainty among the SED leadership concerning both internal policy and policy in regard to West Germany. Both the "Open Letter of the SED Central Committee to the Social Democrats, Communists, and Trade Unionists in West Germany" and the Central Conference of the Unemployed planned for the end of September in West Berlin, were not discussed ahead of time in the Politburo. Ulbricht and Pieck left on vacation immediately after the World Youth Festival without bringing either the Politburo or the Central Committee together for a meeting.
2. The SED chairman, Grotewohl, had no prior knowledge of the "Open Letter to the West German Social Democrats, Communists, and Trade Unionists" before it was given to Neues Deutschland for publication. Rudolf Herrnstadt, who is not only chief editor of Neues Deutschland, but also provides liaison between the Politburo and the Soviet authorities, is presently in the Soviet Union and was responsible for directing the terms of the "Open Letter" directly from Moscow.
3. Both in its content and in the political trend which it indicates, the "Open Letter", which reactivates the old Communist program of unified action, came as a surprise to the SED leadership. According to the political line as fixed by Pieck, Grotewohl and Ulbricht at the end of the World Youth Festival, Soviet-SED policy was now to be directed toward the mobilization of opposition to West German rearmament on the part of Germany's European neighbors, particularly France, Italy, Belgium and Holland. This was to be accomplished with the propaganda motif that German imperialism is entering a new era with American material support, and that although this new imperialism may cloak itself with the European symbol, it will be very clearly German. This policy was presented to the SED as the Soviet-Communist policy for the coming months. The Russians clearly realized, however, that such a policy, directed against West Germany, would mean a final end to the possible success of the previous German unity line with its slogan of "All Germans at One Table". They therefore recommended temporary restraint. The present question is how the new line of the "Open Letter" as demanded directly by Moscow can be made compatible with the German imperialist line.
4. The new appeal to West Germany is a result of the belief that both the SPD and the West German trade unions are now, more strongly than ever before, inclined

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toward an anti-American policy. This trend has supposedly been brought about by recent rulings of the Western Allies on such questions as German property abroad, coal exports, the Ruhr Authority, and occupation costs. Although the Russians have expected West German rearmament to begin in the next few months, they now believe that a real delay or even a complete cancellation of the planned rearmament policy could result from this unexpected opposition within West Germany.

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